

Arlington

MASTER COMPOSTERS

Forty-ninth Edition

February 2007

The **MASTER COMPOSTER** Program of Arlington is in partnership with Texas to dramatically decrease yard and household waste going to landfills by inspiring and educating citizens to reduce, recycle, and reuse.

► 2006 Volunteers of the Year

Congratulations to Cyndi and Stephen Ives and Greg Gordon, Arlington Master Composter Volunteers of the Year.

Trained in February of 2002, Cyndi, Stephen and Greg immediately took ownership in our Veteran's Park site. They have worked almost every Saturday without fail and have also helped with lots of other activities. Over the last 5 years, it is estimated that they have built and turned over 800 compost piles.

The Arlington Master Composter Program would not be what it is today if not for such fine people.

So, to Cyndi, Stephen and Greg.... THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO!



Charlie and Marge Shiner's recent trip to Australia and New Zealand.



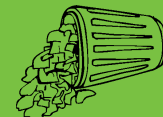
Sydney Opera House



A friendly kangaroo



Arlington's 7th Annual COMMUNITY LITTER CHALLENGE March 24, 2007



Your group can earn \$\$\$\$ and prizes for picking up litter!

Tired of litter in our creeks, parks, streets and the community in general? Well, you can do something about it. The City of Arlington is having a Community Litter Challenge.

Compete for a better and cleaner tomorrow!

Litter is an ongoing problem in Arlington. Who wants to drive through our city and see plastic bags, drink cups, food wrappers and other litter? **You can help!** Give some time and effort to help Keep Arlington Beautiful

What? City-wide litter challenge.

Who? Any club or organization is eligible. Groups who collect the most trash in their category will be awarded cash prizes.

Where? Your group picks out the public location you want to clean up or we can assign an area. All sites have to be approved. The collected litter can be taken to several locations for disposal.

When? Saturday, March 24, 2007, 9am to noon.

Why? Arlington is our home. Litter attracts more litter. Pick it up today so tomorrow will be litter free.

How? Fill out the registration and release forms.

For more information, call 817-459-6587 or email Roni Crotty.



From the Conservation International web site:

Top Ten List: New Year's Resolutions to Protect the Earth

Kate Barrett, Staff Writer Dec. 18, 2006:

WE ARE ALL CREATURES OF HABIT.

Whether you vow to stop bad habits or start good ones, now is the time to make New Year's resolutions you can keep. These ten simple tips for creating a healthier Earth are sure to last through 2007 and beyond:



1) Replace your incandescent light bulbs with compact florescent lights (CFLs).

Look closely at labels when buying light bulbs. Those marked as CFLs last 10 times longer and use 66 percent less energy than incandescent bulbs. As a result, CFLs save an average of \$30 in energy costs over their lifetimes – as much as 10,000 hours, though turning CFLs on and off too frequently will shorten their lives. CFLs also reduce the release of greenhouse gas emissions and are safer because they burn at a lower temperature (100° F) than incandescent and halogen lights, which can burn at temperatures up to 1000° F.

2) Inflate your car tires. When walking or biking isn't feasible, you can do something to better protect the Earth while driving. Take a step in the right direction by inflating your car tires. Pumping them up can improve your gas mileage by about 3.3 percent – a savings of about 7 cents per gallon. It's the right thing to do for your wallet and the right thing to do for the Earth.

4) Turn down the hot water heater.

It's far easier than stepping on a scale. Take CI's short eco-footprint quiz to find out if you need to tread more lightly on Earth's biodiversity. Measure how last year's habits stack up, and you'll be well on your way to becoming a full-fledged eco-warrior in the year ahead.

Set your water heater to 130° F. While you're at it, throw on a sweater and lower your thermostat for the winter by just three degrees. These simple actions can have enormous positive consequences, preventing the emission of nearly 1,100 pounds of carbon dioxide over the course of 2007. And that's just from you! Get your friends on board, and the benefits will multiply.

3) Weigh your ecological impact.

It's far easier than stepping on a scale. Take CI's short eco-footprint quiz to find out if you need to tread more lightly on Earth's biodiversity. Measure how last year's habits stack up, and you'll be well on your way to becoming a full-fledged eco-warrior in the year ahead.

5) Choose your seafood wisely.

We can't afford to wait until 2008. The world's seafood will be entirely depleted by 2048, according to an early November report in the journal Science. That means the moment to shape up is now. By buying and eating certain types of seafood, you can discourage harmful fishing practices and avoid the more depleted or threatened species. Take a look at Seafood Choices Alliance or Seafood Watch to make smart choices.

6) Plant a tree.

It's not nearly as labor-intensive as it sounds, and it's a small price to pay for a healthy Earth. Trees soak up carbon and absorb harmful greenhouse gases, but they are disappearing at a shocking rate. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that an average of 32 million acres of forests are destroyed each year. Not if we can help it. Order your tree online at a website like this one: Tree In A Box.

7) Offset your carbon footprint.

Carbon footprints are soooo last year. Luckily, CI's new carbon calculator guarantees you'll be on the cutting edge in 2007. It empowers you to offset your personal impact on Earth's rising climate. Donate \$10 to offset your cross-country road trip, \$20 for the upcoming family reunion, or \$7 for a domestic roundtrip flight. Your money will help protect the roughly

832,000-acre Makira Forest in northeast Madagascar and prevent millions of

tons of CO₂ from entering the atmosphere before it is sold!

8) Buy locally produced meats and produce.

Sounds like a good idea, but you don't know where to start? Just type in your zip code on Local Harvest's website to see a list of farms and farmers' markets close to home, as well as nearby restaurants committed to supporting their neighbors. Buying locally produced food cuts out the middlemen and the vast amounts of energy required to get your products onto store shelves. Most produce in U.S. supermarkets travels an average 1,500 miles

9) Drink more water from reusable glassware.

It's great for your bank account, your health, and your planet. The average American consumed more than 400 beverage bottles and cans in 2006, leaving behind wasted glass, plastic, steel, and aluminum. That adds up to excessive amounts of fossil fuels and hydropower for mining, processing, refining, shaping, shipping, storing, refrigerating, and disposing of those materials. Of course, changing your drinking habits both at home and at work is applicable to just about every other habit, as well. You've heard it before and you'll hear it again: Reduce, reuse, and recycle.

10) Get an early start. Make a year-end gift to support conservation efforts in 2007. It will be money well-spent. CI has received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent evaluator of charities. More than 85 percent of our expenses go directly to conservation programs and only 4 percent to fundraising. And if you donate before the ball drops at midnight on Dec. 31, you can double your impact on conservation in our Chairman's Council Challenge Fund.

For more information go to www.conservation.org



Interested in corporate recycling?

Consider joining the Greater DFW Recycling Alliance.

Our members receive cutting edge information, networking opportunities and educational programs for any size business interested in recycling and waste reduction strategies.

For more information, please contact Lorrie Anderle at **817-459-6778** or at anderlel@ci.arlington.tx.us.

The Crotchety Composter

by John Darling

September 2006

UTA Compost Update

Last time, our intrepid Lorrie reported on the grant that has allowed UTA to hugely expand its composting effort. Things have happened since then: We've been propelled into industrialized compost, and my old UTA pitchfork has developed a bad case of cobwebs.

Our Bobcat arrived in September, and it's a big hit. Its bucket scoops up about 4 wheelbarrow loads, so turning a large pile has gone from 6-8 hours to less than an hour. I've torn up the grass, made noise, polluted the air, and consumed diesel fuel, but that's the price of keeping 450 acres of leaves out of the landfill. It's progress, though; I just wasn't keeping up without it.



Our UTA Bobcat: It's cute as a button and moves leaves like crazy.

Then our in-vessel rotary composter showed up in November. It became Arlington's biggest piece of yard art until somebody sent over a diesel generator to run it. Now we've got a mess of shredded leaves and kitchen waste simmering in the belly of the beast, and we hit 137 degrees the other day.



The in-vessel rotary composter. Very shiny, it also makes compost.

How the Big Boys Do It

So now that I'm becoming a hairy-chested commercial composter (small

scale), I went off with my supervisor to the annual meeting of the U.S. Composting Council in Orlando. It was serious business, with talks, panels, and a room full of very friendly vendors. The finale was a long visit to the compost site at Disney World. They bussed in about 300 of us, made us wear funny vests and hats,



What the well-dressed composter is wearing these days.

and we watched as vendors demonstrated their imposing machines. The monsters shredded whole trees, turned windrows, and screened mountains of compost.



A 1000-horsepower grinder. Somehow it makes shredding look easy.



Absolutely the coolest machine at Disney World. It turns compost and carries its own flags.

We had a short tour of the compost operation. Here's their official blurb with a few comments: ...the Aerated Static Pile Composting facility [air pumps and miles of tubing under long windrows]...includes 8 acres under roof and processes biosolids [no way,



A small part of the 8 acres of windrows.

thanks anyhow], yard trimmings and animal manures from the Animal Kingdom [kudu doodoo?]; and the Food Waste Composting Facility which features an In-Vessel composting system for processing food residuals from restaurants and cafeterias throughout Disney World (about 40 tons/day; 120 pounds/day for UTA).

The meeting made me think about our place in the composting scheme of things. I wonder how the total product produced by thousands of backyard composters compares to that made by commercial operators. Are we a drop in the compost bucket? Or do our efforts make a serious dent in the total? Of course I hope so, but even if they don't there's just something irresistible about a steaming backyard pile on a cold morning. So somehow my response to giant commercial composting was to build a new pile in my yard. It needed to be interesting, so I composted my first rug. It was a rag rug that was already falling to pieces, so I pulled it apart and layered the bits in with leaves and some things that I won't admit to in public. More later if I can find the pieces again.



Compost on a different scale. It may be small but they don't do rugs at Disney.

Welcome 2007

Master Composter Interns.

As many of you are aware, we recently welcomed a new class of interns. February 16 and 17 was our annual Master Composter Workshop. Hopefully, this means that we will be seeing some new faces on Saturday mornings at the demonstration sites. Please welcome Mike Andrews, Paula Duke, Terry Gratton, Richard Harrell, Lavine Horton, Dorry Keene, Mark & Debra Lewis, Patricia Norris, Ric Overley, Deborah Shepherd, and Ahmad Yazdani to the program.

The City of Arlington Environmental Services Department is very appreciative of all who attended the workshop. We'd also like to thank Jane Borland for volunteering her time and expertise. Once again, Jane received rave reviews for the excellent job she did teaching the workshop. A big thanks also to Diane Benson, Sharon Thorwald, Charlie Shiner and John Darling for helping out as well.



Annual Wormshop

Tuesday, March 20th
7:00 to 8:00 pm
Fielder House Museum
1616 W. Abram Street
Arlington TX 76013

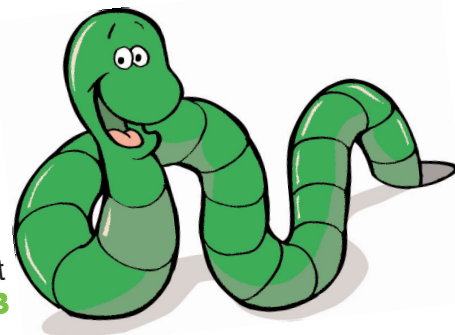
We'll provide everything you'll need to start your own worm composting bin, including the worms.

Please RSVP by

March 13

so we'll know how many pounds of those little wigglers to order.

anderlel@ci.arlington.tx.us
or call Lorrie at
817-459-6778



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